

Applicant: BÖDICKER et al.
Application No.: 09/870,386
Examiner: T. Lu

Amendments to the Claims

1.-39. (Cancelled)

40. (Currently amended) A method for screening medical cases comprising the steps of:
- a.) storing a multiplicity of medical cases each of which contain a group of images of a particular portion of a patient's anatomy, the views of the images of all groups for all medical cases being the same;
 - b.) establishing a preselected order of the medical cases;
 - c.) providing a user interface with a set of icons, each individual icon representing a specification (i) for a designation of a particular view of an image of the group of images and (ii) for the processing thereof;
 - d.) establishing a common workflow containing a plurality of serially arranged data fields;
 - e.) interrelating the common workflow with the medical cases to screen orderly one by one;
 - f.) preprogramming a sub-set of the set of icons into a preselected order corresponding to the serially arranged data fields of the common workflow by the user selecting the sub-set of icons and the order;
 - g.) loading the specifications represented by the ordered sub-set of icons of the set of icons into the corresponding data fields of the common workflow;
 - h.) coupling the user interface to the common workflow whereby a user can control stepping through the serial data fields;
 - i.) in response to a user stepping to a data field, retrieving from the store of medical cases the specified particular view of an image of the current medical case being screened, processing as specified by the data field, and storing in the data field of the common workflow;
 - j.) whereby an ordered sequence of preselected specified images of each medical case can be viewed, one by one, as derived from the stored groups of images for all said medical cases;

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- k.) displaying, for viewing by a user, each ordered sequence of said preselected specified images derived from the stored images of each said medical case, in order, one after the other; and
- l.) controlling the stepping through the serially arranged data fields to view the ordered sequence of said preselected specified images derived from the stored images of each medical case by a user initiating only a single action input to move the workflow from each current serial data field to the next successive serial data field.

41. (Previously presented) A method for screening medical cases according to claim 40 wherein each icon of the set of icons specifies one of an image, an image view, an image resulting from processing of an image according to a preselected algorithm, a tiling of images, activation of the marking of a region of interest, entry of a diagnosis, entry of an annotation, an image resulting from a computer aided diagnosis function performed on an image, and activation of the display of computer assisted diagnosis markers.

42. (Previously presented) A method for screening medical cases according to claim 40 including the further step of providing a screen coupled to the user interface, displaying the set of icons on the screen, providing on the screen a sequence bar, and carrying out the preprogramming step f) by drag-and-drop of the icons on the sequence bar.

43. (Previously presented) A method for screening medical cases according to claim 40 wherein the single action input of step l) is effected by one of pressing a key, touching a screen at a designated point, and speaking to a speech recognition component.

44. (Previously presented) A method for screening medical cases according to claim 40 including the further step of highlighting an image being viewed by a graphical input tool included in the user interface.

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45. (Previously presented) A method for screening medical cases according to claim 40 including the further step of entering and storing an annotation for one of a medical case or an image being viewed.

46. (Previously presented) A method for screening medical cases according to claim 40 including the further step of maintaining a stack of medical cases interrelated with the workflow.

47. (Currently amended) Apparatus for screening medical cases comprising:

- a) a store for storing a multiplicity of medical cases each of which contain a group of images of a particular portion of a patient's anatomy, the views of the images of all groups for all medical cases being the same;
- b) means for establishing a preselected order of the medical cases;
- c) a user interface with a set of icons, each individual icon representing a specification (i) for a designation of a particular view of an image of the group of images and (ii) for the processing thereof;
- d) a common workflow containing a plurality of serially arranged data fields;
- e) means for interrelating the common workflow with the medical cases to screen orderly one by one;
- f) means for enabling a user to preprogram a sub-set of the set of icons into a preselected order corresponding to the serially arranged data fields of the common workflow by the user selecting the sub-set of icons and the order;
- g) means for loading the specifications represented by the ordered sub-set of icons of the set of icons into the corresponding data fields of the common workflow;

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h) the user interface being coupled to the common workflow to enable a user to control stepping through the serial data fields one after the other;

i) means, in response to the user actuating a single action input for stepping from a data field to the next successive data field, for retrieving from the store of medical cases, for each serial data field, the specified particular view of an image of the current medical case being screened, for processing as specified by the data field, and for storing in the next successive data field of the common workflow;

j) whereby an ordered sequence of preselected specified images of each medical case can be viewed, one by one, as derived from the stored groups of images for all said medical cases; and

k) a display for displaying, for viewing by a user, each ordered sequence of said preselected specifications of each said medical case, in order, one after the other.

48. (Previously presented) Apparatus for screening medical cases according to claim 47 wherein each icon of the set of icons specifies one of an image, an image view, an image resulting from processing of an image according to a preselected algorithm, a tiling of images, activation of the marking of a region of interest, entry of a diagnosis, entry of an annotation, an image resulting from a computer aided diagnosis function performed on an image, and activation of the display of computer assisted diagnosis markers.

49. (Previously presented) Apparatus for screening medical cases according to claim 47 including a screen coupled to the user interface for displaying the set of icons on the screen, a sequence bar on the screen and whereby the preprogramming is carried out by drag-and-drop of the icons on the sequence bar.

50. (Previously presented) Apparatus for screening medical cases according to claim 47 wherein the single action input is effected by one of pressing a key, touching a screen at a designated point, and speaking to a speech recognition component.

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51. (Previously presented) Apparatus for screening medical cases according to claim 47 including a graphical input tool included in the user interface for highlighting an image being viewed.

52. (Previously presented) Apparatus for screening medical cases according to claim 47 including an annotation component for entering and storing an annotation for one of a medical case or an image being viewed.

53. (Previously presented) Apparatus for screening medical cases according to claim 47 wherein the interrelationship between the common workflow and the medical cases is achieved via a stack.

54. (Previously presented) Apparatus for screening medical cases according to claim 47 wherein the single action input is used to step from one medical case to the next succeeding medical case.

55. (Previously presented) Apparatus for screening medical cases according to claim 47 wherein pointers are provided to indicate which medical case and which specified image of the ordered sequence of said preselected specified images is being currently viewed by a user.

56. (Previously presented) A method for screening medical cases according to claim 40 including the further steps of storing the preprogrammed sub-set of the set of icons and storing a user ID.

57. (Previously presented) A method for screening medical cases according to claim 40 including the further step of initiating via the user interface one of (i) editing the preprogramming and (ii) moving to the next medical case for viewing.

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58. (Previously presented) A method for screening medical cases according to claim 40 including the further step of providing an indication the medical case and specified image being currently viewed by a user.